

Message Text

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17

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 USIE-00 CU-04 NIC-01 SAJ-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 SSO-00

INRE-00 NSCE-00 DRC-01 /125 W
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O 131013Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6106

INFO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 2095

GENEVA FOR USDEL CSCE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT UR US

SUBJ: SOLZHENITSYN

1. EMBASSY HAS CONTINUED IN TOUCH WITH WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS WHO ARE IN TOUCH WITH SOLZHENITSYN FAMILY. ASIDE FROM TELEPHONE CALL TO MRS. SOLZHENITSYN LAST NIGHT, PURPORTEDLY FROM POLICE OFFICER, STATING THAT HE WAS "UNDER ARREST," WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ON HIS PRECISE STATUS: WHETHER HE IS DETAINED FOR QUESTIONING, AS WITNESS IN ANOTHER CASE, OR UNDER ARREST FOR SPECIFIC CHARGE (AND IF SO, WHAT CHARGE).

2. OFFICIAL FROM USA DIVISION OF MFA LAST NIGHT SEEMED HONESTLY UNAWARE THAT SOLZHENITSYN HAD BEEN PICKED UP. NOVOSTI, WHICH IS NORMAL CHANNEL FOR REGIME PROPAGANDA EFFORTS WITH WESTERN NEWSMEN, THIS MORNING REPORTEDLY IS GLUMLY REGURGITATING PRE-ARREST VIEWS ON SOLZHENITSYN, WITH NO NEW LINE.

3. EMBASSY ASSUMES THAT DECISION TO MOVE AGAINST
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SOLZHENITSYN WAS TAKEN AT POLITBURO LEVEL. PRESUMABLY

REGIME SHOULD BE AWARE, AS RESULT SAKHAROV CASE AND RECENT FUROR OVER SOLZHENITSYN, THAT REACTION IN WEST TO ARREST WOULD BE SHARP. THERE MAY NEVERTHELESS STILL BE SOME ROOM FOR MISCONCEPTIONS HERE REGARDING IMPACT ON WESTERN PUBLIC OPINION AND CONSEQUENT DELETERIOUS FOREIGN POLICY EFFECTS. WE ASSUME DEPARTMENT WILL MAKE CLEAR TO SOVIET EMBASSY EXPECTED STRONG REACTION WITHIN U.S. IT WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL FOR US TO BE ABLE TO ECHO SUCH COMMENTS IN OUR CONTACTS HERE.

4. EMBASSY ASSUMES THAT DEPARTMENT PRESS SPOKESMAN WILL MAKE CLEAR U.S. CONCERN, WHILE HOLDING BACK ON ANY DEFINITIVE REMARKS PENDING CLARIFICATION OF SOLZHENITSYN'S ACTUAL STATUS AND AVOIDING ANY LINK TO SPECIFIC BILATERAL ISSUES. AS CONTRIBUTION TO DEPARTMENT'S CONSIDERATION OF PRESS LINE, WE SUGGEST FOLLOWING:

THE SECRETARY HAS, OF COURSE, BEEN FOLLOWING THE DISTURBING REPORTS FROM MOSCOW WITH GREAT INTEREST AND --I MIGHT SAY--CONCERN. THE INFORMATION CURRENTLY AVAILABLE DOES NOT MAKE CLEAR EXACTLY WHAT ALL THE FACTS ARE. WE DO NOT INTEND TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE LEGAL PROCESSES OF THE SOVIET UNION. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS A FACT OF LIFE THAT THERE IS DEEP AND UNDERSTANDABLE CONCERN AMONG THE AMERICAN PEOPLE--AND AMONG PEOPLE EVERYWHERE--FOR THE FATE OF A MAN WHO HAS WON THE WORLD'S HIGHEST AWARD FOR LITERATURE. WE HOPE THAT THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES WILL TAKE THAT CONCERN INTO FULL ACCOUNT IN THEIR TREATMENT OF THIS CASE.

5. EMBASSY WOULD PLAN TO MAKE NO REPEAT NO STATEMENT IN MOSCOW.
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